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NATIONAL WATER QUALITY LABORATORY TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM 2000.02

February 17, 2000

To: Distribution E
From: Merle Shockey, Acting Chief
National Water Quality Laboratory
Branch of Analytical Services
Subject: Re-release of Total Phosphorus (labcodes 1983, 1984, 1992)
data for results from 10/01/98 to 01/21/99.
Effective Date: 2/17/00
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Revision: NONE

Scope and Background

Total phosphorus data for labcodes 1983, 1984, and 1992 were censored incorrectly from 10/01/98 to 01/21/99. The data are correct, but the limits controlling the remark codes were not applied properly. For example, even though the Laboratory Reporting Level (LRL) was 0.05 milligram of phosphorus per liter (mg-P/L) for these labcodes and the Method Detection Level (MDL) was 0.03 mg-P/L, results from 0.01 to 0.03 mg-P/L were reported with an "E" code when they should have been reported as <0.05 mg-P/L.

The analytical line used for these analyses was in the pilot program for the long-term method detection level (LT-MDL) process. After the LT-MDL process was fully implemented, the censoring program was updated and this error was corrected. Data released after 01/22/99 have the correct remark codes.

The data from this time period have been updated and re-released. The use of uncorrected data will result in differences in 1999 water-year data: during the first 4 months, concentrations ranging from 0.01 to 0.03 mg-P/L will have an "E" code, whereas concentrations in that range for the rest of the water year will be reported as <0.05.

For questions on this particular event, contact Gary Cottrell at (303) 236-3490 (email COTTRELL). For further information on the LT-MDL process, refer to the Web site at <http://wwwnwql.cr.usgs.gov/Public/ltmdl/ltmdlsplash.html>.

Key words: Total phosphorus; Reporting levels; Lab codes 1983, 1984, and 1992; Data correction; Long-term method detection levels.

Supersedes: None